

(Bulletin for Statehouse, Capitol Mall Employees Sept. 10, 2001)

Department of Administration
Construction Update No. 6

East Steps Form Work Underway, 'Where Do Tiny Sponges Go?'

Photo at right:
Construction workers
are putting forms in place
this week as part of
preparation for rebar
underpinnings and
pouring of concrete
for the new East Steps
of the Capitol Building.



McAlvain Construction crews used a large crane over the weekend to swing scaffolding and other related pieces of equipment to the upper floors of the Capitol Building. Scaffolding now surrounds the entire East Wing of the Idaho Statehouse as exterior masonry work and patching continues.

According to the Division of Public Works, the restoration consultants from Chicago have been here and gone, and the CSHQA architects are trained and ready to proceed. The sponge jet cleaning process was approved, and masonry cleaning on the exterior will continue. Formwork on the East Steps has begun, and a rebar delivery is expected early this week.

Last week's *Renewal News* reported how Chicago masonry experts were training local CSHQA architects on cleaning the "cheek walls" which are adjacent to the East Step Stairwells. The cleaning technique, known as "sponge jet media cleaning," involves tiny sponges being forcibly shot against the wall to clean it. One reader emailed a question wanting to know "where the little sponges go after they're bounced off the walls and whether or not they are edible to birds and squirrels."

Here's what we found out: The contractor conducting the masonry cleaning is utilizing drop cloths and curtains to reclaim the small button-sized sponges once they have been used in the cleaning process. Apparently, the firm feels it is able to reclaim all used sponges. We also contacted Sponge-Jet, manufacturer of the sponge-cleaning system regarding its potential toxicity to small animals/birds. The Company faxed us a letter indicating that it is not aware of any instance of animal ingestion of its abrasive nor is it aware of any attraction by animals to it. Sponge-Jet has been using this product for about 10 years, and provided the Division of Public Works a copy of its "Material Safety Data Sheet". ***Thanks for the Question!***

(Please note: The intent of **Renewal News** is to provide readers the most current and complete information as possible regarding construction activities during the Capitol Restoration project. However, construction schedules are always subject to change, based upon weather conditions, transport and acquisition of support equipment and personnel, or other unforeseen circumstances.) Inquiries, comments on the Restoration effort can be sent to **Diane Garcia** dgarcia@adm.state.id.us You can also view all issues of **Renewal News** online at: <http://www.idahocapitolcommission.org/whatsnew.html> If you have questions about this newsletter, contact **Pat Wynn** at 332-1827 or pwynn@adm.state.id.us